

Proclamation 5799 of April 20, 1988

Law Day, U.S.A., 1988

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

For more than three decades our country has observed May 1 as Law Day, U.S.A., in grateful recognition that our free Republic is a government of laws, not men. On Law Day, U.S.A., we join in proud commemoration of America's legacy of liberty, justice, and self-government, and we pause to salute those past and present who have served and sacrificed to win and protect our freedom and to preserve law and tranquility in our communities—including the men and women of law enforcement whose daily courage and dedication make our laws and liberties a living reality.

Because ours is a government by consent of the people, we are our own lawgivers; hence, the virtuousness of our laws depends on our individual and civic virtues. That is truly something to remember on any Law Day, U.S.A., but especially in a national election year, when we recall how important it is that each of us be familiar with our rights and liberties and with the legal and political guarantees of our freedoms. Only through knowledge, awareness, and love of country can we take full part in the self-government that is ours as Americans to perpetuate.

This is why all Americans of legal voting age should make up their minds, this year and each year, to vote in every election for which they are eligible and to observe all election laws faithfully. By voting, we have our say in who our representatives are and thereby in the shaping of laws that affect us, our communities, our States, and our Nation. We should always remember that those who vote not only demonstrate their voice in public affairs but also exercise one of the precious rights for which brave people around the globe today fight and die just as did our ancestors. Let us understand that our voting is a way to keep faith with them, with our fellow citizens, with the brave Americans who defend us at home and abroad, and with all who cherish our American heritage of liberty, justice, and equality before the law.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Public Law 87-20 of April 7, 1961, do hereby proclaim Sunday, May 1, 1988, as Law Day, U.S.A. I urge the people of the United States to use this occasion to reflect on our birthright of freedom, to express gratitude to those who protect our country and our communities, to familiarize themselves with the need to vote, and to encourage and assist others to vote. I ask the legal profession, schools, public bodies, libraries, courts, the communications media, businesses, the clergy, civic, service, and fraternal organizations, and all interested individuals and organizations to join in efforts to focus attention on voting. I also call upon all public officials to display the flag of the United States on all government buildings on Law Day, U.S.A.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 20th day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of

the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5800 of April 21, 1988

National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The generosity for which the American people have always been known shines clearly today in the willingness of many people to become organ and tissue donors so that others might live or have an opportunity to enjoy a fuller life. Thousands of Americans will receive an extraordinary gift this year—a kidney, heart, liver, pancreas, a combination of heart and lung, skin, a cornea, bone, or bone marrow. The great majority of these gifts will have been possible only because a caring American agreed to donate an organ or tissue for transplantation.

We can all take pride in this generosity; yet the need for additional transplants remains great. Thousands of Americans will wait this year for a well-matched organ or tissue to become available. For some, no donor may be found. The decision to volunteer as an organ donor is a significant act of personal sacrifice. Fortunately, knowledge about organ donorship has spread in recent years. Groups in our communities stand ready to answer questions about organ and tissue donation. The American Council on Transplantation and school, church, and community groups are involved. Many States give people the chance to sign donor authorization cards when they complete their driver's license forms. Others require hospitals to offer people the opportunity to donate under appropriate circumstances.

Encouragement of organ and tissue donation must always be accompanied, of course, by thorough reflection and complete information. Recent medical and technological developments are posing new moral and ethical questions about transplantation in certain circumstances. Individuals, and society as a whole, must carefully consider these questions so that we never undercut our reverence for the sanctity God vests equally in the life of every person, from the moment of conception until natural death.

The Congress, by Public Law 100-273, has designated the week of April 24 through April 30, 1988, as "National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of April 24 through April 30, 1988, as National Organ and Tissue Donor Awareness Week. I ask health care professionals, public and private service organizations, and all Americans to join in supporting this humanitarian cause.